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Malone. B. 226.





THE  
HERMIT CONVERTED:  
OR, THE  
MAID OF BATH MARRIED.

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*Censorem Quis corrigat ipsum?*

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By A. M. E. C—

---

*Adam Moses Emanuel Cohen*



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L O N D O N :

Printed for the AUTHOR; and Sold by J. WILLIAMS,  
at No. 38, in Fleet Street,

[Price One Shilling and Sixpence.]

T H E  
MAID OF BATH MARRIED,  
IN ONE ACT.

BY WAY OF  
S U P P L E M E N T  
TO THE  
MAID OF BATH MOCKED.  
IN ORDER

To redeem the REPUTATION of the LITTLE  
THEATRE ROYAL in the HAYMARKET,

From degenerating into a FARCE of COMEDY.

With a PROLOGUE and short EPILOGUE,

---

By ADAM MOSES EMANUEL COOKE.

---

*Quicquid est correctum in Principiis & moribus, est rectum  
in Praxi.*

---

To which will be added in the course of Performing,

An Interlude of a celebrated Sonata between the first and second Scene—Of a Duett. upon two German Flutes between the second and third—Of the Grand Seigneur's Dance between the third and fourth—Of a new Farce Entertainment, called the Grand Seigneur between the fourth and fifth—The Exhibition of a curious Orrery of mechanical Politics between the fifth and sixth—and of a grand Jubilee Ode, logical, moral, physical, metaphysical, theological and political, consisting of thirty-six Stanzas, with six Chorusses between the sixth and seventh Scene—But this with critical Notes will be published by itself.

N. B. Each Copy of this Comedy and Ode is manuscripted A. M. E. Cooke, in his own hand Writing. All Piracies will be Prosecuted with the utmost Rigour.

T O

# SAMUEL FOOTE, Esq.

S I R,

**I** WAS at your Theatre last Friday Night, and tho' I admire your *Maid of Bath*, as an exquisite Piece of *blank* dramatic Ridicule upon some of our late, as well as present Actors in the Drama of State ; yet the Catastrophe of your Plot, or rather Farce or Shadow of a Plot, seems as if your comical Stroke at the Errors and Follies of others, was only calculated the better to introduce a still more egregious Error of your own, under the Cover of a theatrical Piece of canonading your Superiors ; I mean a sinister Encouragement of Cœlibacy in the Fair Sex, by reducing the Maid of Bath to the Dilemma of either chusing a Husband out of an old Hunks or Grub, a Debauchee, a gouty Rake, and a mechanical Prig, or else of living and dying in a Cloyster of her own making.

In other Words, to save the Disgrace of your four Heroes, when they could stand the Field of Battle no longer in Campo Martio Veneris, you play off the Stink-pot of Love upon your Enemy, in order to make her run away from such stale Offers of Matrimony, only that your four Heroes may sheer off with a little more Credit.

But as arch as this Drollery may be in the Drama (which certainly borders, if not encroaches too much upon the Precincts of female Tragedy, under an unmanly Burlesque upon the Maid of Bath, with the Finesse of your four Heroes by-the-by) yet what is still a great deal worse, it must be looked upon as a most damnable Strain of Satyr upon the Superannuacy of the whole British Constitution, in the Eyes of our own People, as well as of foreign Courts, through the Representation of their respective Ambassadors here, who are observing enough to remark the Taste and State of a Nation (as a judicious Man does that of an Individual) not only from the solid Vigor of its formal and stately Appearances, but from its little minute careless Exhibitions of the real and genuine Frame of Mind and Body, in the Hours of its trifling Amusements, upon the Stage of its unguarded Moments of Drollery, when all the Nerves send forth their natural Tones, like an *Æolus*, as every Gust of unconstrained Fancy breathes upon it.

Yet this Error in the Drama and Catastrophe of your *Maid of Bath* may be easily corrected, nay improved in-



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to an Advantage, by the Addition of another Act, with the Introduction of an ecclesiastical Hermit, brought out of his Monk's Cell into social Life, in order to open a new and deeper Fund of latent Powers in the Body natural and ecclesiastical, (which must open a new Fund of inexhaustible Treasures in the Body politic of Great Britain) with all the Nerves of our military Strength, as it were in a Paradise of Nature regained out of the very Weakness of the British Constitution, just when the Heroes of Gallantry are sheering off to leave the Maid of Bath in the Lurch (as the Courtiers did his late Majesty, on the Advance of the Rebels towards London in the last Rebellion) to stand upon her own Legs, and to shift for herself.—Tho' by the way, where a Nation is under the Predominancy of such a false Taste, as to be tickled with nothing but the Pleasure of deceiving and of being deceived into Lobspond; I am very conscious, how necessary, as well as difficult, it is to correct the vicious Taste, by reforming the vicious and abandoned Manners of the Times, in both Court, City and Country; before it is practicable to raise the true courtly Laugh upon the philosophic Principles of rational Creatures.

Starched up as I am with Divinity, in the austerities of both the intellectual, moral, and ceremonial Law, it cannot be expected, that I should be so current in the quaint Phrases and Idioms of the Playhouse, as to finish a Comedy off in the Space of three Days, while my Head is so fermenting full of more important Concerns as to work this over the Vat out of the Mass. It will be enough for me, like Mr. Button in your Play, to cut out and leave it to you and yours to manufacture it into its proper Trim of Alamode for the Fashion of the Times, with the pert and alert Glee of theatrical Expression. Yet considering all Things, the candid Critic will, methinks, be apt to make one Declaration in my Favour, that I have in the Time done Wonders, beyond their Expectation, in such a bad Harvest Season of theatrical Productions; tho' there never was more Matter in the Sinking Fund of comic Wit for Authors, from the Reign of William the Conqueror to the present Year of his Majesty George the Third. Hæ Nugæ seria ducunt.

The Addition of this one (as a fourth) Act to your Maid of Bath, which brings your Comedy off the Field  
of

## D E D I C A T I O N.

of Criticism, with a new Plot of exquisite Humour, under a Laugh of the Sleeve, by a few suggested Hints in the Vicissitudes of the final Issue or Upshot of the Play, consists of seven Scenes of about five Pages each, and may be acted either with or without your Maid of Bath.

But tho' I do not intend to bring it into your little Theatre, yet I make you an Offer of my Leave to publish it as an Appendix or Supplement to your new Comedy, on the Terms of Meum and Teum in the Profits of the Publication; and this I do for the Ransom of your theatrical Majesty of the little Theatre, out of the Hands of your critical Enemies; by whom you are already taken Prisoner, and condemned to be put into the Lumber Room, for the Use of Paper-kite-makers, which are boy'd up into the upper Regions, you know, by the tight, but gentle Tugs of the critical Boys, who do not yet want to pull them down, till they have run out their Tether, when the old Adage is verified in that, as well as in all the other Transactions of Life, between the World above and the World below.

Non progredi in Cœlum est regredi in Orcum.

For a - - - Sic redit Labor actus in Orbem.

If you should not happen to like this Proposal, I shall apply for Leave to bring it upon the Theatre of Drury Lane or Covent Garden; or I shall publish it, by way of a Supplement to your heterodox Principles of the Theatre, for the Sake of doing a little more Justice to the Character of my native Country, which must suffer in the Conception of other Courts and Theatres Abroad, however such Plots may suit the sinister black Arts of our own at Home, upon the methodistical Plan of bribing to deceive—of deceiving to condemn—of damning to corrupt, and of corrupting to destroy the Dupes of either Court or Playhouse Chicanery, under the Influence and Impression of such farfical Performances upon their Minds.

But in truth, there is no great Fear of such a Consequence. For the Minds of Britons are so deep, as well as in such a Ferment of Agitation (and not without just Cause) about their Rights, Liberties and Properties, that, like three Ladies of three distinct Families, whom I could name, in Great Britain, they burn up such puerile Conceptions, like so much Chaff, without ever letting it take Root

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Root in either their Heads or Hearts, or any where else, where the Farce expires in a tush, pish, or psna of both Abhorrence and Contempt.

For such Fumblers might as well expect to drop Anchor in ninety Fathom of deep Water, in the Bay of Carthagena, with seventy or eighty Fathom of Florida Cable, as think of making any lasting Impression upon the British Heads and Hearts of either our male or female Patriots and Defenders of our once happy Constitution in Church and State, which it is not possible for the whole World to supersede for its overthrow, if our Country, which can alone do it for herself, will qualify to supersede the Letter of Nature, Law and Gospel, with the Spirit of a justifying Law, for the Confirmation of the Letter, in the Spirit of a sanctifying Gospel.

But tho' the present Ministers of Church and State have not Cable enough to ground their Anchors in such deep Waters, it is no Proof, or even Presumption, that nobody else among the grand Compounders can do it; and till some body produces Cable enough to keep the Navem Republicæ at top above Water, with her Anchors of Nature, Law and Gospel, grounded at the Bottom, it is to be hoped, that those very Ladies, who are concerned in the Steerage, will keep the Nuvem Republicæ upon the Float in the open Seas, thro' all Weathers, lest they should put into an Enemy's Harbour, and go (as they must for want of Tackle) to the Bottom in a Lump.

Now if either Mr. Foote, or the Ministers of Church or State, should think this too severe upon the late Comedy of the Maid of Bath Mocked, in either the Theatre or the Cabinet—I answer first—it is much severer for the Hermit to stand twenty Years in a Crucible, to keep her and them in what is a Scandal to the whole World—and 2dly, that an honest Man will rather chuse to do his King and Country a substantial Service at the Hazard of offending both for the present, than go to the Bottom with both, thro' a Fear of their present Displeasure, which he is sure to bring so much the heavier upon himself, thro' such a Fear, in the End.

And therefore, without further Apology to either you or them, I am, as far as I can be consistently with my Respect due to my King and Country,

Yours and theirs most respectfully,

A. M. E. COOKE.  
P R O

No. 11, Dartmouth  
Row, Westminster,  
July 23, 1771.

# P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by D— G—, in the Character of MERCURY.

—*Comicum facit Indignatio Versum.*

**Y**E Gods and Goddesſes, who have your ſeat  
Each in Olympus—are ye all aſleep,  
With Jove your ſovereign, who ſometimes nods  
Faſt in his Juno's arms, like other Gods?

Rouſe one and all : or there's one Foote, a foe,  
Will play the Devil with your world below.

For in Great Britain he, with French fineſs  
Of *Scrub, Rake, Gout and Prig*, (four hacks) addreſs,  
Has jilted, faith, a pretty ſmirking laſs,  
To find a huſband in her looking-glaſs.

But if the Maid of Bath, with half an eye,  
Darts thro' into your ſecrets of the ſky,  
And will—unleſs ſhe is broke in to breed,  
Ye ſoon like cyphers may look on indeed,  
Till all the Gods deſcend to ſee the ſhow,  
(Or live unweari'd) in the world below.

On this account we rous'd a Hermit's wrath,  
To turn the Maid into the Wife of Bath ;  
To keep the world above unto ourſelves,  
From male and female prying human elves,  
Who grin, and ſnarl, and fight, like dogs and cats,  
Unleſs employ'd to breed and mind their brats.

So come away, and take each God your place,  
To ſee, how we with our queer-looking face,  
Play off the monkish arts of a nun-flayer,  
To turn the tables againſt Foote the player ;  
That man and wife may ſtill in their old ſtyle  
Keep breeding, till they ſtock the Briſh iſle ;  
And we can ſpare a Maid of Bath indeed,  
To fill the world round with a better breed ;  
For ſure the old now drawn near to its dregs,  
Like Foote, ſeems to be on its latter legs.

And can ye, will ye, kill us then with frowning,  
Who thus plung'd in to ſave a Maid from drowning !

A. M. E. C.

P E R-

# Personæ Dramatis,

## Ex Personis realibus Descriptæ.

### M E N.

Hermit - - - by No Body - - - by—  
 Major Rump - - by every Body - - - by—  
 Sir Knight of Bath by Some Body - - - by—  
 Squire of Bath - by Bully Sham Gout - by—  
 Mr. Button, Recorder of the Ceremonies by Stale  
 Trick Double Fee - - - - - by—  
 Hermit in the Doctor's Disguise by Loonton - by—  
 Sir Knight of Bath in the Parson's Disguise by  
 Lambeth Marsh - - - - - by—  
 Mr. Button in Lawyer's Disguise by Bloomsbury by—  
 Ego et Rex by Doctor Hermit unmasked into an  
 original Briton and Patriarch of Church and State  
 in the Isle of Wight.

*Ut caveat, ne quid Detrimenti capiat Respublica Britannia.  
 in Fronte Systematis, dum I. W. posteriora defendit in  
 Orcadibus, D. B. in insula Hominis—D. C. in insula  
 Coquet aut Holy Island, & Rex in Centro totius Syste-  
 matis.*

### W O M E N.

The Maid of Bath - - by H--xh--m Betty - by—  
 The female Captive or Patriarchess elect of S. Audley by—  
 The Patriarchess in propria Persona the Miss W--kes by—

### T H E

T H E

## MAID of BATH Married.

## ACT I. SCENE I.

At the MAID of BATH's House.

*Enter HERMIT. Stares about.*

**I** WAS in hopes of a wedding here to night—but I was born to be mortified all the days of my life.

Invited to perform the ceremonies of the church, I wish I may not be taken in to perform the ceremony of the bed-chamber in the upshot of the play.

And is all their gallantry come to this at last—every one of them sheered off, and left the young lady with the pure untouched laurels of virginity upon her own hands, in the very field of battle, after all their intrigues, plots, counterplots, ambuscades, battles and sieges of her fortrefs, which she had capitulated to surrender, on condition of her marching out with all the honours of war in love.

Egad, they deserve to be broke every man 'of them. For I begin to smell, that the match is quite off again at the very point of consummation, and the lady, by a new piece of playhouse chicanery, is thrown upon my hands to provide for both her and myself—tho' God knows—

Well, if they turn their coat upon the left shoulder, it's time for me to turn mine upon the right. For if they dare not qualify to make a wife of a maid, who knows but I may make a maid of a wife; or rather, if they will make a maid of a wife, it is my turn to make a wife of a maid for these lusty fellows.

*[Pretends to discover the Maid of Bath, quite vapoured, in a corner.]*

B

Fair

## 10 THE MAID OF BATH MARRIED.

Fair lady, I was, as I have long been, in quest of you, to put the right church key to Hymen's lock into your hands.

*Maid of Bath.* And I was, holy father, in quest of you within this half hour, to give you, as I might hope, a new key to the church door, in lieu of the old one which you had lost.

For I suppose you would have had no objection to marry others, tho' you do not, for great and mighty reasons of state, chuse to marry yourself.

*Hermit.* I thank you, fair maid—I should have no qualms to marry you, tho' no body else will—

*Maid of Bath.* Will?—what? pray, father, explain yourself.

*Hermit.* Will go to church to get a pair of new eyes, new ears, new legs, new arms, and new charms in a new wife, when they have hack'd out their old mistress.

*Maid of Bath.* Pugh, pugh, Sir, tho' a few of them may dance upon stilts, or crawl upon crutches, yet heavens forbid, but that there should be young plants enough in the nursery still, to supply the place of such blasted and withered stumps, which are fit for nothing but a bonfire, at the next victory of Cupid o'er a couple of tender hearts.

*Hermit.* Deep rooted, too deep rooted are they in iniquity, I fear [*shakes his head*] to be ever grubb'd up without a convulsion of nature—

Besides, who would grub 'em up, if they could, without the purveyor's leave, which is in their favour.

Moreover, the arch one, on the other side of the water, has put in his caveat at Doctors Commons against grubbing 'em up, till he marks the tenths for the king's firewood in the chapel royal, lest the people should cut 'em up into matches for lighting of candles, to open the eyes of the whole parish, into a sight of their legerdmain in the dark, among the ministers of all denominations.

*Maid of Bath.* Say you so, father?—Did they, and do they still only mean to give me a surfeit against social life, that they may make a nurse of me to dress their sores, and wash their foul linen in an hospital of infirmities.

*Hermit.* Worse, worse, ten thousand times worse, if possible, tho', God knows, that is just bad enough.

For these old battered rakes of gallantry apply for a wife, as they would for an undertaker, to bespeak their coffin,

## THE MAID OF BATH MARRIED. II.

coffin, to knock the nails of their own name into it, for the sake of lying in it with their heels uppermost, when they are no longer able to stand upon their own legs; and yet without the right principle this is the practice.

*Maid of Bath.* A pretty comfortable sort of an estate, indeed, for a maid in her teens, as I am, to be made a grave of for corruption to the living before they are dead.

*Hermit.* Ah, and to be employ'd night and day too in cramming an old rake, like an old capon in the cawel for the pot or the spit, and when it comes to be served up upon the altar of conjugal life, she must have a rough stomach, who could touch the most delicate bit about it.

*Maid of Bath.* There is no solid foundation for real love on either side, where matches are made for mere convenience.

And where there is no love, there can be no sincerity, no mutual confidence in each other—it is but the lamb lying down with the lion at the best.

*Hermit.* The wife flatters out of fear, and fears out of flattery.

*Maid of Bath.* And the husband misconstrues all his wife's endearments of him, into so many manœuvres to cover her intrigues with others, knows his own hypocrisy, suspects his wife's, grows jealous, and at last stands centry over her with the eyes of an Argus, till Doctors Commons looses the knot, which was never tied in the sympathising affections of either.

*Hermit.* There is too much of that in the world, God knows, and yet very few will use the means to mend it, on either one side or the other.

What think you then of a half of my little hut in the hermitage, with the doves coving about us in the groves of simple and untainted nature.

*[Maid of Bath walks about in a buff, like an affronted peacock's hen, upon the courtly strut; while the Hermit stares at her with as courtly a sneer.]*

*Maid of Bath.* Worse and worse still, if a corruption of the mind can be worse than a corruption of the body—out of the frying-pan into the fire, and out of the fire into the water, is like the doctor, who with death cures all diseases.

*[Struts about.]*



## 12 THE MAID OF BATH MARRIED.

No, no, father, bad as the choice is, give me a sound mind in a diseased body, rather than a sound body with a tainted and distemper'd mind [*Tosses up her head.*]

There may be some hopes of the one, but none of the other. [*Fixes her eyes on him.*]

*Hermit.* A very pretty sign of a sound mind in your distempered bodies, to run away into solitude at one end of the wilderness, and leave a young lady, yea, the Maid of Bath too, alone at the other, with melancholy for her companion and comforter.

S<sup>d</sup> death, a sound mind in a diseased body, or a sound body with a distempered mind, are each of them bad enough, but where both of them are tainted, it is a great deal worse.

*Maid of Bath.* And pray, tell me, where you will find 'em both in perfect health and order for the moral joys of conjugal life—not on this side of heaven, and there is no matrimony on the other.

*Hermit.* You may find what you require in him, who run away from social life to keep and continue the rest of the world in it, and who now runs away from solitude to deliver you from falling into it.

*Maid of Bath.* Are you, can you be in earnest, holy father? Is it possible for such a reformation to be wrought in the change of your mind.

Such a cause in the church must produce a good effect in the state. Come, who knows, but I may chance to make a new husband out of an old invalid of Bath still.

[*Aside.*]

But I am (I may say fully) resolved upon a single life, after such an affront put upon me, with such an offer of they *would*, when they *could not*, as if they wanted to be quite rid of me.

But I'll be even with them, before they make up matters even with me.

[*Aside.*]

*Hermit.* A single life, madam, is like a life upon a troubled ocean in a tempest, without either star or compass for your guide—the sport of every blast that blows.

*Maid of Bath.* Bad as that is, it is at my own expence and peril; but a married life is a life of continual drollery upon the foibles and follies of each other, at the mutual expence of both; if either man or wife ever looks down-wards,

## THE MAID OF BATH MARRIED. 13

wards, and I am sure ne'er a couple in this world ever married to look upwards, till it was too late.

*Hermit.* Be that as it will, if you should put out to sea with your vessel half launched, without its full rigging and complement of hands, before you have taken in either your ballast or your loading, she will run a bad chance to turn up her keel, and to beat about upon the open seas, till she beats upon a rock, and goes to the bottom at last.

*Maid of Bath.* What may be true of things without us, are not true when applied to those vessels of divinity in ourselves, but if it should, it makes nothing for you.

For if I should set up housekeeping in an old ruinous mansion, till I am driven out to sea in an old shattered rotten bottom.

In the first case, I must be continually propping up the old tabernacle, lest it should come tumbling down about my ears.

And in the second case, I must work like a galley slave at pumping, pumping, pumping one leak after another for everlasting, or I must go to the bottom, indeed.

Upon the whole, it is the best way then, methinks, to run all hazards, as I am.

*Hermit.* No—no—I say—you had better turn your house into a fortification, and your ship into a guarda costa, that I may put my great guns on board of the one, and plant a battery of brass cannon upon the other, to fire a morning and evening gun, by way of salute, to the rising and the setting of the sun of love.

*Maid of Bath.* These lovers of mine have so discomposed me, not with shattering my vessel, but with the shattered sight of theirs, that I cannot think right about any thing, till I am put into dock and refitted.

My mind, my mind is quite disconcerted, which distracts my whole frame. I am like a ship in a storm, which reels to and fro, and straggles like a drunken man at his wits end—quite sea-sick, before I come there.

*Hermit.* The best thing, which you can do then, is to put your vessel in tow of mine—and if you go to the bottom, I must consequently go to the bottom with you, unless I should happen to cut away, as some have done before me.

[*Aside.*

*Maid*

## 14 THE MAID OF BATH MARRIED.

*Maid of Bath.* Pray, Sir, don't run me down, as some have done before you, who came very foul upon me. For one durst not touch, lest he should sink me with a foul blast, and another had so blister'd and gall'd his hands with too much use of them, he was become so delicate forsooth all on a sudden, that he would have roared out like a lusty fellow, if I had come within a finger's length of his seven-fold shield of flannel mufflers, and a third would have picked up my money out of a dunghill, and left me to take up the purse for my pains.

*Hermit.* But I shall treat you, my fair one, with more delicacy, tho' I shall not be so delicate about it.

There's a cool hand with a warm heart, at your service, and a breath as fragrant as the breath of morn, full fraught with all the fresh odours of the East, in the gentle zephyr of affection. [*Squeezes her hand and kisses her.*]

*Maid of Bath.* And do you think it possible to refit a shipwrecked mind in a shipwrecked body—if you can promise to do this for me (I mean for the man I love) I do not know but I may venture to take a sight of your lodge (to get the secret out of him.) [*Aside.*]

*Hermit.* On condition that you will promise me also to keep it a secret, till time shall bring forth a full discovery, —and the best in my budget is at your service.

*Maid of Bath.* I shall keep it a secret in the mind till doomsday, if you like, and I hope you would not have me keep it a secret any longer, for then we may expect to repair an old system with a new one indeed,

*Hermit.* Bravo!

For tho' all nature should be wreck'd by vice,  
Heav'n out of Chaos made a Paradise.

But that's too much for players or divines,  
At Little Theatre's Haymarket shrines.

For there as soon as Spring brings forth the year,  
The stars of Winter vanish in the rear,  
All into blanks in *Cloacina's* chains,  
For want of having *nothing* in their brains.

Nay, when our spirits sparkle in our eyes,  
With warm meridian rays of Summer skies;  
Tho' Sol stands at his solstice, in his play,  
The sun of comic humour runs away.

For at the Little Theatre one Foote,  
Ends all his gallantry wrapt in the gout,

With

THE MAID OF BATH MARRIED. 13

With all his flummery of love, Cod's wrath,  
By batter'd courtiers of the Maid of Bath;  
To trick the ladies out of Israel's store,  
When Judah's tools cou'd fumble on no more.

For lo! in stew four famous actors lie,  
Till Cupid brings down Hymen from the sky,  
And bids the Hermit out of Chaos rise,  
(The world was made of nothing, or it lies)  
To add another act full of new life,  
Which turns the Maid of Bath into a wife;  
To bring forth Hermits, whom love sets a neighing,  
For old Bath Maids with new Baths playing, playing.

*[Waves his head waggishly, and presents the end of  
his wand to take her in tow. [Exeunt ambo.]*

The Interlude of a celebrated Sonata, by the Or-  
chestra.

SCENE II.

*Squire in his Parlour with his Bottle and Pipe. Solus.*

The Knight has played the truant in love at last, to  
let the Hermit run away with the Maid of Bath after  
all, for lack of fortune in the one, and for fear of ex-  
traordinary expences in the other, just when her bro-  
ther has dropt off and left her heirefs to an immense es-  
tate, it seems, in South America.

No doubt the Knight is in her black book for that, as  
long as he lives.

But what cou'd he or I do for her in our present state  
of infirmity, where her estate is and must continue in  
the hands of our enemies, unless the crown will enter  
into a law-suit for a recovery of it to the heirefs at  
law.

But he is too much debauched in mind, as I am in my  
body, to beat up a Premier's quarters, with all the arts  
and parts of a begging tongue and a giving hand.

Nay, if I had ever such a good mind to it. Yet, O  
thou gout—oh—

*Enter Servant.*

Sir, a stranger with a letter.

*Squire.*

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Squire. Show him in.

[*Servant opens and lets in a Quack.*]

Quack Doctor. Sir, that letter will best bespeak my business.

Squire. [*opens the letter*] pray sit down, friend—reads.

Dear Harry,

I have sent you a travelling doctor I have just now met with, who has got a recipe from the Hermit of Bath, which will set you upon your legs again in a trice. He has done wonders already. I shall be with you in half an hour, and bring an old acquaintance or two of yours along with me. In the mean time, yours,

*Knight of Bath.*

P. S. He has got a piece of surprising news for you about the Maid of Bath.

Oh, oh—damn the fellow, does he want to dispatch me as his rival to make the better way for himself. [*Aside.*]

Well, friend, if thou canst set me upon my legs again, and take off this embargo upon my limbs, as thou woud'st off an overladen packhorse, that is ready to lie down, or else break its back under its burden, thou needs not range about all day for a place to lie down in at night.

Doctor. No cure no pay, Sir—

Squire. That's fair enough, and yet it may be foul enough too, if thou should'st hap, like some lawyers, to take a double fee for curing one by killing the other—but is the operation painful, or the course tedious?

Doctor. Lah, Sir, it is as quick and easy as milk is turned into curds and whey, where a physician has spirits enough to penetrate into the secret of mixing and matching the means to the end.

[*Squire stares at him in a maze of attention.*]

Seven drops, Sir, seven single drops of this . . . vial, in a glass of Bath water, will change the whole mass of your blood, as a candle turns darkness into light in the twinkling of an eye.

Squire. Thou speakest wonders, friend—I wish I may have enough for such a worker of miracles. But if we may believe the physicians of soul and body, miracles are ceased.

*Doctor.*

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*Doctor.* Except the miracles of making a cure in the body, and a reformation in the soul; for take away the one, and the other would be the greatest miracle of all.

Oh, Sir, the world is kept in bondage by such dribblers in their art, to the antichristian charms of an old Jewish ritual of the ceremonial means—they are like so many pensioners in the service of chymist and druggist, to keep the world under petticoat government.

But, Sir, if you have any doubts——

*Squire.* Doubts I have, friend, and not a few—for I am most damnable afraid to make the experiment, I must needs own——

[*Doctor takes up his hat and makes a motion to withdraw.*]

*Squire.* Nay, what hurry? One minute more—for (live or die) I had rather leap into a bottle of claret, tho' I was sure to be drown'd in't, than take a leap into the Red Sea, for a jaunt thro' the wilderness, tho' all the Moses and Aron's of the present times shou'd offer me their hands to lead me thro' into a lurch,

*Doctor.* You are then, it seems, Sir, a genuine son of old Pharaoh; for he plung'd in with his sons of Nile, after his enemies, tho' he was sure to be drowned, for the discouragement of his successors from following the example of the Israelites, who fared better; and it would be strange to me, if Christians should fare worse, than the Jews did—But some have most fear, where there is the least danger; made sanguine with despair, and desponding with hope.

*Squire.* Seven simple drops, you say—egad, can do no great harm, I should think, to a man who has swallowed a little ocean in his time.

But now I consider of it—I had better have a consultation of physicians upon the case, before I venture on a matter of the last importance.

*Doctor.* You might as well take consultation of the whole linen manufactory, whether you should make your shirts of asbestos, which would ruin all the flax-growers, flax-dressers, flax-spinsters, linen-weavers and linen-drappers too, with all the laundresses in the kingdom into the bargain. For it may be washed in the fire.

*Squire.* That's good Irish, by the way—tho' it must have a damn'd deal of water in its composition to stand burning without consuming, by the by. [*Shakes his head.*]

C

*Doctor*

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*Doctor.* It is manufactured out of water by subterraneous fire, and can never be consumed by any medium, except by a compound of super-cælestial and subterrestrial fire in the conflagration.

*Squire.* And dost thou mean to work the same effect upon my carcase? But know, friend, I would not lose the pleasure of dissolving in one sort of flames, or of melting in the essence of one sort of spirit, for all the everlasting ware (without tare) in Christendom.

*Doctor.* Then I can only recommend it to you, Sir, to *bug* your disease, like a Stoic in love with it, and cry out in the raptures of agonising—*quam suave est hec*.

I fancy we are all Stoics in love, except a few apostates, who have lately applied to the oracle of Doctors Commons, for a dispensation to roar a little at the ring, with the horns upon their heads. How cruel it is to be thus baited by so many bullies in each cuckold-maker's service.

*Squire.* Hark you, Sir—damn it, let's see it—I am ashamed of all this dilly dally—shilly shallying—it is but dying or living by this in a trice, or dying a whole month, or a year, or all the rest of my life by inches, and in good earnest at last.

*Doctor.* Do you, or do you not, Sir, intend to try the experiment.

*Squire.* I do—but oh, now the qualms again—if these seven drops should prove the last seven drops I should ever swallow—damn me, but I would piss upon your head for it, after I was dead and cou'd drink no more.

Or if I cou'd not do it for myself, there is ne'er a master of a tavern in the kingdom but would do it for me.

*Doctor.* I'll answer for your life to all the tavern-masters and publicans in Christendom.

*Squire.* You will have a damn'd many long scores then to rub out for either them or me, if you do.

But the dog perhaps is growing arch upon me. Not a publican in all Christendom, or not a Christian among all the publicans, may be with him conversible terms.

[*Aside.*

*Doctor.* That makes it twice my interest, that you should live to rub out your own scores for yourself.

*Squire.* I am full as much afraid of that as of dying, or rather that is the greater fear of the two.

*Doctor.*

*Doctor.* Then you are just as fit to live, as you are to die, that is, you are fit neither to die nor live.

*Squire.* One word more and then—pray, how comes it, that all the regular professors and practisers of the faculty, have never been able to penetrate into this grand arcanum of their science—answer me that, and I am ready to swallow the devil himself, if you will administer the prescription.

*Doctor.* They are like so many guardians of their art, as it were in its minority, who begin with the outward symptoms of the body, as a clockmaker begins first with the index or pointer of a clock.

And so they go on thro' all the movements, one after another, with one at a time (unless you should happen to give them *two* purses together) till they come to the mainspring at last. While they hang all the time, like a dead weight upon your vitals, a pukeing, a purging, and bleeding away the very life and soul of you, to the very last drop in your purse, for their own experience, at your cost, in mind, body and estate.

*Squire.* Egad, they would make special good state doctors to the constitution (the one half of which has preyed itself into a plethory) for the good of the other in a consumption—But let those be their patients, who will for me—thank heaven, I am not full enough to be leech-bitten, nor yet empty enough to be a leech-biter in the arts of oppression.

*Doctor.* In a word, Sir, the practice of physic is putting a patient, as the law does a criminal, to the press to make him plead, that the court may, by feeling his pulse, discover where the criminal lurks, and where the malady lies, by making it squeak.

*Squire.* I can both squeak and squall hard enough without 'em—but methinks, if the faculty could qualify to touch the catch, they might set the clockwork of the body a striking the hour of the day, at least the hour, where the movements stand and stick.

*Doctor.* But still they can never make a current going clock of it, till they end where we begin, and that is, with putting in the *primum mobile* at first; tho' it must be owned, some of them dabble not a little that way, as well as other folks.



Nay, it is said, there is such a demand for state primum mobiles of late, that the æconomy of making one pendulum serve two clocks is all the court taste.

*Squire.* One for two, and two for one, is too much for me, I know; but it seems, before my pendulum can be of any service, the whole clock, piece-meal, must go thro' the watchmaker's hands. [*Sighs.*] So I must have all the labourers in the *Materia Medica* at work, some a scrubbing, some a filing, some a fodering, and others a boddering me out of my seven senses, with all a tick, ticking in this little case-like carcass of mine for a month or two, like so many wasps a plundering my hive; and death, if I say mum to them in my own house.

*Doctor.* That is too often, and never more than at present too much of the case, indeed.

But here, Sir, where all the movements are regularly digested, and put together *secundum artem*, with every member of a man in its right place, rank and file, you need but wind up the machine, and the whole sets a going at once, in both church and state, like a battallion of the king's guards, at the word of command—march—

*Squire.* Damn me, but thou speaks like an oracle, or first lord of the privy council.

*Doctor.* Nay, I will put the whole clockwork state of your health into right order, with a new mainspring, and what is still more, I will give you the key to wind it up for yourself, when it runs down, at your pleasure.

*Squire.* Egad, thou art the man for me—for mine wants winding up very often—let's see the drops, let's see the drops, I say.

*Doctor.* [*Rings for the servant.*] A water glass full of Bath water. [*Pours in the drops, C-b-a-t-h-a-m and administers.*]

*Squire.* Down it goes—a bitter—sweet, Doctor!

*Doctor.* How do you find yourself now, Sir?

*Squire.* [*Smacks his lips once or twice*] Fittid myself, I wish I han't lost myself—[*Smacks again.*] Oh, I'm a dead man—the Lord have mercy upon me, and that's more than I have said before these seven years—

[*Smacks again, and looks stupid in a reverie.*]

© Send for the parson and the lawyer, they live but next door on each side of me, with me in the middle between them.

*Doctor.*

*Doctor.* Put on a little more of the Stoic, Sir.

*Squire.* Put on the devil! put on that—oh, it flies thro' my vessel, as a bomb does thro' the air, with a blazing tail towards the magazine of all my disorders, in my hands and feet, and in the powder-room, where it will blow me up. [Rears:

SCENE III.

*Enter Knight of Bath in the Parson's gown and band, and Mr. Button in the Lawyer's, and the Major in his old regimentals, as aid de camp to both.*

*Parson.* Sir, I hope your mind is at peace with yourself and your neighbours, tho' your body is in pain.

*Squire.* The pains of my body, pungent as they be, are yet nothing to the racks and tortures of my mind; I would fain confess my sins; but oh, there is a long and black journal of 'em, thro' the great diary of life, for every day of the year, to the last jubilee at Stony Stratford, in a neat pocket volume, which you may publish after I am dead for the good of the living.

[Gives it to the Parson.

*Parson.* This will prove as good as a sinking fund for drollery in a dull hour. [Aside.

*Squire.* The world will see, that I have been a regular sinner at least, tho' not a regular liver.

*Parson.* A very good sign, where your intentions have been so conscientious, as to keep such a methodical account of your actions, bad as they were.

*Major.* Good enough.

*Parson.* Bad enough.

*Parson.* I shall take out an administration to your conscience for the rest of your corpse—on condition; you will leave your deeds with the lawyer for the good of the church.

*Squire.* Then I'm very sure, very little of the effects will ever come into your hands (but I had forgot, the lawyer was here) keep your hold lawyer, till the church gives me a clearance; and then I hope you will be wise enough—but, oh—be that as it may—

I will and bequeath all my estates, lands, tenements, &c. &c. into the hands of the rector of Bath, in trust with the lawyer, for the purposes of legitimating all my illegitimate offspring in the state, which make the principal

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pal part of his majesty's liege subjects; after the payment of all my just debts, mortgages, bonds, covenants, contracts, notes, tradesmen's bills, &c. which my steward always kept safe for me in his office, while I took special care to draw all the cash out of his into my own. Heavens rest my soul.

*Squire of Bath.*

*Doctor.* You do not intend then, it seems, that the clergy shou'd have all their roast beef and plum pudding for doing nothing.

*Squire.* No, no—no fine cures within my manor at least.

*Doctor.* But will not such a condition, in the terms of your last will and testament, throw a shade upon your memory to the prejudice of your heirs and successors, do you think?

*Squire.* And *do you think*, that I will be such a fool, as to go out of the world with such a load upon my conscience, thro' a fear of its censures? For its censures what care I, after I am dead and gone out of it.

*Doctor.* Unless you had a mind to come back, and take up the lodgings of a private pensioner in it, within the verge of the court, till proper apartments can be fitted up for you in either a better or a worse place.

*Squire.* And if I did, it's surely much the wisest way to clear off now with an open confession (while I have a tongue of my own in my head) for myself, rather than leave it to those, who will never do it for me, till they are as deep in the dirt, as I am in the mire; and so it is put off from one to another, till the day of grace elapses at last.

*Doctor.* That is indeed too often the case, why many children suffer for the sins of their fathers from generation to generation.

*Squire.* Of their fathers, did you say? But egad, a great many more suffer for the sins of their mothers, I trow.

But it shall not be my fault, if I suffer for either the one or the other.

*Parson.* You have left the black book of all your own sins behind you, with your deeds to the church to rub them out—that's enough for you, without raking any farther back into the sins of your mother, which wou'd make a volume as big as the church Bible in one article,

ticle, only for every chapter, but *nonumque premater in annum*.

*Squire*. O, parson, I should have made a better man, if my mother had been a better woman ; but as the proverb says, it's hard to make a silk purse out of a sow's lug. *Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret.*

*Doctor*. Hush, hush, hush.

*Parson*. Look forward, look forward, and not behind.

*Squire*. Oh, but it's hard, very hard, for a son, whom his father slipt into the world under his mother's back door, ever to look forward towards the fore door with any spirit.

*Doctor*. Come in as you wou'd, you came out at the fore door once for it, I'll swear, however.

*Squire*. I was begotten, born and brought up a retrograde (as all my actions testify) in Bolingbroke's principles, which were crammed down my throat with sweet meats, before I cou'd know my right hand from my left, under the cover of a cuckold, who had no cover for himself.

*Lawyer*. *Non nos a regibus, sed a nobis reges derivantur*, will therefore make so much the more glorious a motto upon your coat of arms, while living, and upon your monument when dead, as the first founder of your family.

*Squire*. A very pretty figure it causes me to make in the world indeed, as it will in the history of future times, where every action of my life, ever since I entered into the service of the crown, publishes and proclaims so many tell-tales both against the mother and the son, that what is bred in the bone of one family will never be out of the flesh of the other, after such a clandestine juggle in so many bye-battles, as it were between them.

*Doctor*. A very good warrant of authority in the body politic, tho' it be *contra legem*, for what my master the Hermit has done towards a union of two distinct natures in the living temple, *secundem legem*.

But the hardship is, he cannot justify the one as legal; will he condemn the other as illegal; and yet the legality of the former, and the illegality of the latter, authorises him to do both for the very re-establishment of the

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the one in the letter upon the other in the spirit of the law, or the one overthrows both for want of a better foundation to stand upon.

*Squire.* Oh, I'm gone— [Swoons away.]

*Parson.* Thou sure hast play'd the Brutus with our Cæsar,

And made us free upon the stage of life,  
To speak the honest truth with freedom's lips,  
Thus a tree falls by hewing out its chips.  
And yet he fell with such a speech he made,  
As throws a light upon his very shade.

*Lawyer.* Not like his mother, Doctor (for we hate her)  
We praise the treason, while we damn the traitor.  
But she condemns a Mortimer's-like art,  
While yet she loves the traitor in her heart.

*Doctor.* Are these your paw tricks?—but to end all strife,

With a new charm, I'll bring him to new life.

*All.* No—shut the scenes.

Let at his death a dog not howl or bark,  
Who lov'd to huddle fuddle in the dark.

[Scene shuts.]

SCENE IV.

*The Same opens again.*

*Doctor.* Let us have all the air we can, to feed the lamp of life with the breath of æther in his nostrils—or—I'll raise all Bath about your ears.

He only fainted away with being smothered up too closely in his own chamber, for want of fresh air, by his greatest enemies, which are they of his own household.

[He revives.]

*Squire.* Nothing but a qualm of conscience, my friends—but it is such a qualm, as I shall never get fairly and fully rid of, till I bind the Rector of Bath and the Lawyer to legitimate all my mother's children,

(I'll catch the gudgeons with a bait upon a hook of their own making.

[Aside.]

*Parson.* (I have brought myself into a fine job of work with my black gown upon my back—I wish I was fairly clear of both it and the duty, and he may take out his own legitimacy himself for me.)

*Lawyer.*

*Lawyer.* (Egad, I shall have enough, and too much to do to take out my own for myself, without engaging to take out others and my own too.)

*Parson.* (I must squeak a note above Eli, before I can do it for either myself, or any body else, in such a courtly place as Bath, where the quality make no ceremony of chalking up an heir now and then to each others scores.)

*Squire.* Your categorical answer, gentlemen.

*Lawyer.* I cannot do it, till the Parson first legitimates the law with the baptism of the gospel, in the fiery trial—but I had rather die at Bath by water.

*Parson.* As I have a soul to be saved, nay, as I hope for salvation, Squire, I cannot send you to heaven in such a galloping trice, where your body is so near upon the confines of corruption and putrefaction, unless I send you, by piece-meal, with one half at a time, in short payment; yet on the terms aforesaid, I can put you into pickle for ship use, till you arrive at the haven, where you would be.

*Squire.* I have been in a pretty pickle long enough, but this Doctor has made too much of a salt-petre of me, I fear, for you ever to make a St. Peter of me.

Oh, oh, it is running through my stomach, heart, lungs, liver—oh, here it's—

*Doctor.* It has got into the *vena cava*, it's upon the descent—it will be in the piss-pot presently.

*Squire.* Oh—there it's—

*Doctor.* In his bladder—stand firm.

*Squire.* O'ons, I stand as stiff as a poker, but I never stood there in my life, but I was very near a fall.

[*All laugh.*]

*Parson.* Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed, lest he fall.

*Major.* Come, come, he will do well enough yet, I see.

*Squire.* That which is bred in the bone, will never be out of the flesh.

Oh, it's in the calves of my legs, and at my elbow joints.

[*Agonizes in his hands and feet, and swoons away.*]

*Doctor.* Hold fast, and pop up again with your head above water.

[*Squire opens his dying eyes, shaking his head, and closes them again, as if for ever.*]

D

All.

*All.* He's gone.

*Parson to Doctor.* You might have as well bid him see clear in the mist of death, when that like the shades of night blots and blanks the sun of day.

*Doctor.* [*Holding his pulse.*] The lamp of life still burns, and will break out again thro' this dreary mist, to brighten all about it presently.

*Squire.* [*Opens his eyes with amazing surprize.*] O heavens, what a gauntlet have I run, thro' all the chains and fetters, in which love and wine had bound their Sampson fast—Not a single intrigue, Jack, but is clapt down in the black book of accounts, for payment in kind; and not a fuddle, priest, but leaves an indeliable stain upon the mind, which nothing but death, or the doctor's drops, can ever purge away—it's hot work, it's hot work—

Oh, Doctor, I wish I was all made of asbestos.

O the millions, the millions to be accounted for!—and what is worse still, no abatement, no, not of a single farthing to a manager and master of the ceremonies, as I am, but only a little mercy in the different times and portions of payment, with a court of conscience. It's hot work, hot work, and only made more cruel by the slowness of the fire—oh, I wish I was all made of asbestos—

And then I would not refund a single farthing, tho' they should roast me in Phalaris's bull, till there is a goal delivery by an act of grace at the day of judgment, out of a spunging-house, into a blacker hole than any in Newgate.

*Doctor.* Come come, it's well it's no worse—pick up your crumbs again. You will be well enough presently.

*Squire.* O what a tug I had with beau Nash and the old dutchefs in the shades of my delirium, before I could get clear of them—and just when, as I thought I had opened the gates of life, a squinting son of a woman started up and arrested me by the skirts, and was like to have raised all the city militia about my ears.

*Parson.* You have just escaped in the very nick of time. For when the old master of the ceremonies shall be reinforced with all the court ladies upon the present black list under the banners of the Coterie, the return out of the groves of Cyprus will be impracticable, unless a lover bears Tom of Lincoln on his coat of arms.

*Lawyer.*

*Lawyer.* A word's enough to the wise—take more care, Squire, for the future.

*Button.* And don't run so fast, for they who run fast, cannot run long.

*Squire.* No, no, no more relapses for me. That would be like a French manœuvre to raise an insurrection in my own country. 1st, To draw me out of the enemies territories, into a conquest of my own, in order to draw me next back again backwards into a losing game, in the old world, instead of pushing forwards for fresh laurels in the new, to be taken prisoner by the French abroad, and to be ransomed by my own countrymen, after I had quashed a pack of rebels at home, who have since learnt a more courtly way of doing their business more effectually.

*Lawyer.* There lay the first cause, which led us at last into the necessity of making peace at any rate.

*Squire.* That was a blot in somebody's escutcheon, which the present age will not wipe out.

*All.* (He has weathered his point.) We congratulate you.

*Doctor.* And how are you after all?

*Squire.* Like a general, who has gained a complete victory—better than ever I was in all the days of my life, and fit for a new campaign of love with the Maid of Bath, and her armour-bearer the Hermit, though they had all the tribe of Levi for their aidde cons. [*Capers about.*]

*Major.* He is just gone off with the Maid of Bath, in tow to his hermitage in the grove, to settle their manner of living upon the fortune left her by her brother, who died abroad in the Spanish service.

*Squire.* The devil! Is it true—let's after 'em hue and cry, not a minute to be lost.

We offer'd once, but to provoke her wrath,  
To make a wife into the Maid of Bath;

But now we go to take her home for life,  
And turn the Maid of Bath into a wife;  
That we may send the Hermit, *with his rates*,  
Abroad to manage for us her estates.

For who wou'd let a Monk e'er run away,  
'Sdeath, with the Maid of Bath, and such rich prey;  
That we may—but I'd sooner go to hell,  
'I han take up lodgings in a Hermit's cell.

D 2

*Major.*



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*Major.* We block—he draws, we finish off the plan,  
That man may end, just as he first began.

*Parson.* Nay, how can that be?—till some supersede  
A chaos with a paradise indeed.

But light works in the upper hemisphere;  
The shades, per consequentiam, it's clear.  
If so; find for it, where you will, a prop,  
The work of building here begins at top.  
So, all in vain, till he who ga ns the height,  
Shall draw the plan, and lay the basis right!

*Lawyer.* Nay, tho' the Monk has carry'd off the Maid,  
I have his Mistress captive in my shade,  
On whom I'll make reprisals in my wrath,  
Unless he shall give up the Maid of Bath.  
She's lawful prize, took in my morning's cruise,  
And why should not a Lawyer have his dues? [*Exeunt.*

*Doctor.* Thus in a hostile camp a spy-like elf,  
May from his foes learn how to save himself.

And since it is resolv'd to take by storm  
My Helen with my Troy-like cell in form,  
It's time for me to slip another way,  
And put my Troy with Helen in array,  
That when the Monk shall fail, the Maid may spring  
Her mines to blow 'em up—God save the King—

[*Exit at the other door.*]

S C E N E IV.

*In the Hermit's Cell.*

*Doctor, Maid of Bath, Squire, Parson, Lawyer, Major.*

*Lawyer.* Doctor, what are you got here before us, in  
quest of your Father-confessor the Hermit?

*Doctor.* The Hermit has left me in trust with this  
Lady, and a commission to do business for him, 'till he  
appears to act for himself.

*Lawyer.* Our business then is to make a proposal,  
which can neither be disagreeable to this young Lady, nor  
to your master the Hermit, nor yet to yourself, unless you  
mean to make her Confessors to a declaration of your,

as well as of all our passions for her in a group of lovers at her shrine.

*Doctor.* Pray, Sir, explain yourself about your business—For let it be what it will, I have lived long enough to be pleased with one half of the world, without being displeased at the other half of it.

But know, Gentlemen, I am bound in gratitude to the Hermit for the obligations some are here under to your humble servant the Doctor, for such a happy change in their health for the better.—Squire, I am glad to see you here—but to the business.

*Lawyer.* The Court has thought fit to appoint this Gentleman, the Squire, to be Governor-general of East and West Florida.

*Squire.* And Mr. Divinity, the Hermit, your master, may be Deputy-governor, if he pleases.

*Doctor.* That would be like building a college, as Wainfleet did Magdalen at Oxford, and afterwards accepting a place in it from his own servants, whom he made his masters, before he, who was the Founder, could become their master and President of his own College.

*Squire.* Your fee, Doctor, is yet in my purse for my cure—mind that.

*Doctor.* A wise man will sometimes do good, to keep the bad from doing him a mischief. Do me no harm, and I want no more for my pains, or he who gave can take away from you the power of abusing it a second time to such bad purposes.

*Squire.* He's a deep one, upon my soul. Other Pettifoggers tie up their friends hands to loose the hands of their enemies; but he, by loosing, has tied up mine from doing him any harm.

*Doctor.* Some may thresh the corn, and get the straw for their pains; others may grind the wheat, and get the bran for their moulter out of their boulting the flour for their employers; and the next, who can wait no longer for better employment, may make and bake the bread, and get an old mouldy crust for his pains; but he, who sow'd the seeds, Gentlemen, has the best right to eat of the loaf after all. How do ye digest that, Gentlemen.

*Major.* Take her by storm, take her by storm.

*Maid of Bath.* Hold.

*Parson.*

### 30 THE MAID OF BATH MARRIED.

*Parson.* Hold, the Goddesſes interpoſe.

*Lawyer.* The conſent of this young Lady to go with him may hap be an inducement—too ſtrong for him to reſiſt.

*Maid of Bath.* Gentlemen, I am in my own diſpoſal, and ſhall never give my hand to any man, who has not both ſomething to give, and go too where I pleaſe.

I ſhall never ſtay at home to pick the bare bone of a ſhoulder-blade, or a leg of mutton haſh'd over again, with thoſe, who dare not break the bone, and get the marrow out of it for a freſh bill of fare.

But I ſee, Squire, you have got a freſh ſtock of health out of ſome new ſtorehouſe.

*Doctor.* Out of the Hermit's budget. I wiſh the Squire much happineſs in the enjoyment of it.

*Maid of Bath.* [*Sighs.*] I'll try the Doctor's temper a little. [*Aſide.*]

Dare you, Squire, venture abroad with the Maid of Bath, now when you are able? for to be able when you are not willing, is worſe than to be willing when you were not able.

*Lawyer.* I know one Mr. Button, who will go to the Devil's arſe a peak with you, Madam.

*Maid of Bath.* He takes the right method to draw me his way, by being willing to go mine; but I ſhall ſpeak to you by and bye in your turn (without ſpeaking to you at all). What do you ſay, Squire; for the Doctor and the Parſon ſay nothing.

*Doctor.* Ma'am, I am never ſo happy as when an enemy mortifies me for your ſake.

*Maid of Bath.* Why?

*Doctor.* Becauſe my happineſs is like light ſhining upon weak eyes in a dark place—they can neither bear the light themſelves, nor ſee others enjoy it with pleaſure.

*Parſon.* I ſay, Madam, I am both willing and able to ſtay at home with you.

*Maid of Bath.* But if you ſtay, unleſs ſome go, you can neither ſtand your ground here, or any where elſe—

And for me to ride upon the ſhoulders of a huſband ſinking into a quagmire, and damning his wife night and day as the cauſe of weighing him down, becauſe he has not mettle enough to keep moving with her upon his back, would not be agreeable to me, I know.

*Squire.*

THE MAID OF BATH MARRIED. 31

*Squire.* I am willing, very willing, and somewhat more able than I was; but I own I have not yet got resolution enough to go abroad with you, Madam.

*Doctor.* I am in my master's name both willing and able to go abroad with the Lady, to the end of the world, if she likes, as the right way to a better.

And if it is her pleasure, I am as able as I am willing to stay and stand my ground at home.

*Maid of Bath.* I know, you stay only, till you can go with a good grace, that the rest may continue where they are, by virtue of your going abroad for them. That's honesty in good morals, I confess, and honesty is the best policy still.

*Doctor.* There's my hand; I'll stay and stand, till you run.

*Maid of Bath.* And there's my hand; I shall not run away from you, till the one runs foul upon the other, and then, I fancy, it will be my turn to take you in tow, and bring you back into harbour in your mother-country.

*Doctor.* If you will go to the top end with me, let me go to the bottom without you, whenever I refuse to go to the bottom with you.

[*They pledge hands.*]

*Parson.* Doctor; I forbid the banns.—Don't you know, that you are only a pioneer to the church?—You have just done so much, like a moral man as you are, as qualifies the Rector of Bath to take your wife from you.

*Lawyer.* And you have just said so much as qualifies the long Band to take her from the short one.

*Squire.* If that's the case, Gentlemen, the Governor-general of East and West Florida has the best right in the state to take her from you all three, with Gospel, Law and Physic in tri-unity, *divide et impera.*

*Major.* They have one and all overshot their mark. I shall keep like a body of reserve.

*Squire.* For it is impossible for the Maid of Bath, as a woman, to go to the top with her spouse, till man first goes to the bottom with the sex, unless she would deny and counteract her own.

*Doctor.* But where the first man begun the miracle of descending, why may not a woman with the last man end in the miracle of ascending with him.

*Major.*

### 32 THE MAID OF BATH MARRIED.

*Major.* But if neither church nor state can go to the top or bottom without each other, it then only remains for me to meet the Maid of Bath between the top and bottom, and that is in the middle.

*Parson.* No more haste than good speed, Major; for you must certainly go to both ends, before you can unite two ends in the middle.

*Squire.* Bravo—well said, Parson; and so, while the Doctor is going to the top, as an agent for the church, it is my part to run away with the Maid of Bath to the bottom, as an agent for the State, and then the Doctor may come down to pick her up, as fast as he likes.

*Doctor.* If the Lady's process must first take place to the bottom upon the shoulders of her lover, whenever he refuses to descend, she must ascend—or if he has courage to go to the bottom with her into a chaos in the body-politic of Ireland, it is but a piece of prudence to forward one at least upwards, that she may bring the *posse comitatus* down for their deliverance, or the whole must lie in lobspond.

*Parson.* And what does all this discover more at last, than a social co-operation of both ascenders and descenders, upon Jacob's ladder, which is described to us without any parade or finesse of expression in the all court simplicity of scripture politeness.

*Doctor.* Yet this simplicity in the ascending and descending plot of two social contrast parties, obliges the Court to descend from St. Peter's with the Court Ladies to St. Patrick's in Ireland, thro' the medium of the Orkneys, before the Church can ascend from St. Peter's by way of St. Paul's into a Pantheon in South and North America united, thro' the medium of the Isle of Wight.

*Lawyer.* But the one cannot ascend, till the other descends; nor this descend, till that ascends; but neither one nor other can either ascend or descend, till the Daughter of Babylon goes down with the one, and the Daughter of Sion goes up with the other, which must cause a revulsion in the middle, unless they both provide a *medius nexus extra ordinem*.

*Doctor.* This *medius nexus* is the present grand staple of the British constitution, which applies the very means of a division to a more solid union of the two expanded contrast.

contrast parts; and yet this very union is the means of preserving a distinction between the two contrast parts in one system.

*Lawyer.* You have given us a lift at home, and in return I must give you a lift abroad: For such an explicit union at home causes an explicit disunion between the two contrast parts of south and north latitude upon the continent of America.

*Doctor.* *Quid tum?*

*Parson.* *Quid tum?* Such an event in America employs Britons for all the world, and the Hermit for Britons to slip in between the two divided halves into the chasm, and to close up the breach for a British conjunction of South and North America. *Hæc est ars dividendi foras consociandi domi partes secundum artem.*

*Doctor.* But such a close of south and north latitude in the continent of the new world, will divide the triple old world in the Turkish dominions in the middle upon the western coasts of Asia, for an application of a like remedy by the British church heir of an abdicating family, which rids this country of a blistering plaister, that has long tickled their heads with a hum.

*Squire.* The upshot of all this grand playhouse council of state, which will not be disagreeable to this representative of her sex, is, that, *stand is the word.*

*Doctor.* Come, let us see then, who will stand longest, the church upon the shoulders of the state, or the state with the church upon its back.

*Parson.* It is the devil take the hindmost, run as hard as you will; but if you stand, it's the devil take the foremost.

*Squire.* Damn me, if I go into Ireland any more, and especially for life: I have had enough of that already—not but the country is well enough for them, who can dine upon a cold leg of mutton hash'd over again.—It's time for me to make my retreat. [*Sheers off.*]

[*After him slips the Parson, and Lawyer, chewing.*]

*Squire.* Ireland!

*Parson.* Ireland!

*Lawyer.* Ireland!

*Squire.* Damn me, if I go into Ireland double.

*Parson.* It would be well if I could make my way out of it single.

*Lawyer.*

# 34 THE MAID OF BATH MARRIED.

*Lawyer.* Baits enough in it, but he's a gudgeon, who would take the bait to be catch'd himself at last. No Ireland for me.

*Major.* When I am commanded, I must obey—but I shall ne'er go till I must.

Before man learns to go, he learns to creep,  
It's wisdom sure to look before we leap.

*Lawyer.* So for us, father, you may take in the edition.  
Of the new *checkquered* still with the *old's* prohibition.

But if that overrules all the rest on your shelf,  
I'm afraid, you at last will but *take in yourself*.

*Doctor.* O thou sage politician, the more I compress,  
In my own little heart both the spirit and flesh,  
With a hug and a squeeze, till the two both unite,  
In the center of man, where he offers his mite,  
At the mint of creation ; the more without din,  
My *America* opens to let me come in.

Where the more we unite south and north latitude,  
Yea, the more it divides Mahomet with a feud,  
In the midst of old Sion for cardinal Prank,  
To slip into a pope, and to fill up the blank.

While the junior issue of Jacobites launch,  
For Hibernia's coast with the broken-back'd branch,  
E'en as soon as they list to bless England's shore,  
With a riddance of those it ne'er wants to see more.  
In the state thus a Britain provides with the church,  
For a run-a-way race, who left both in the lurch.

Not so

We go

With a cheer into latitude blank on the line,  
Where the sun never sets in a *bubble* to shine.

*Maid of Bath.* How can you go, and leave us in the dark ?

How can you stay, and never act the spark ?

[*Doctor saunters about in a reverie and breaks out.*

I cannot stay, a traitor to mankind——

I cannot go, and leave this maid behind——

This bids me stay, that bids me move my ark,  
Between the two, oh ! cou'd I hit the mark:  
To save my country from invading foes,  
Who rush upon it, if its patriot goes,  
Who rush upon it, if he stays ; for why !  
Thou plays, O earth, a truant to the sky.

How

THE MAID OF BATH MARRIED. 35

How can I stay ? how can I yet embark ?  
When not a soul cries *stay*--or *go*--*no--bark* ! [*Turns about.*

[*The Maid of Bath weeps, aside.*

Britannia weeps—I cannot bear that sight—

[*Takes her by the hand.*

Cheer up, my love, I'll act thy spark to night.

[*Exeunt arm in arm.*

Bath Theatre in the Dressing Room.

SCENE IV.

*The Actors all in propriis Personis.*

*Foots.* What the devil's the matter with you all now ?  
I was in hopes, that when you had the choice of either  
going up or down, fairly given to you, that every thing  
would have been settled to the satisfaction of you all.

For this was the ultimate end I had in view upon the  
Maid of Bath.

*Woodward.* To the satisfaction of us all, did you say ?  
The audience may as well be satisfied with a play with-  
out a plot, as a player without either a wife or a mis-  
tress.

*Foots.* The œconomy in vogue, which changes a wife  
for a mistress, leads us by degrees to keep neither the  
one nor the other at our own expence, and yet both at  
the expence of our neighbours, and what would you  
have me do for either you or myself ?

*Woodward.* And so you are to have the honour of both  
a wife and a mistress, and we are to be your agents to  
keep them by doing the business for you.

*Foots.* If you make the horns, I wear them.

*Weston.* That shan't satisfy me—his majesty's compa-  
ny of Commedians know better—it is usual for his yeo-  
men of the theatre to play themselves into either the one  
or the other, with the humours of comedy ; and when  
they are tired of either, it is as usual for them to play  
themselves out of both, with a new plot of the tragic  
strain in the buskins of the stage.



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*Foots.* A little patience, gentlemen, and you shall have all you desire—yes, yes, you, Mr. W. shall have a wife, as Pygmalion had, of your own making.

*Woodward.* I do not understand you.

*Weston.* What do you mean?

*Foots.* I mean, that since you would not go down into Ireland to make your wife as cool as a cold clay clod, you must now forsooth shew the spirit of true gallantry, you must fetch down fire out of the clouds to re-animate her ma's with such a flame as will keep you all warm enough.

*Weston.* Thus by your skill at the billiard table, you pretend to play us into one pocket, that you may the better play us only by reverberation into another on the opposite side. The best way, methinks, is to keep in the middle still of the Little Theatre in the Haymarket.

*Foots.* And there you will both find a wife or a mistress, who will stick as close to you as the shirt upon your back—by your own confession.

*Woodward.* By our own confession!

*Foots.* For by your own confession you are married to your own black book, which you surrendered to me in your qualms of conscience—you wou'd be squeaking.

*Woodward.* [*Sighs.*] A subtle rogue——

*Foots.* For by squeaking you have made me your father confessor indeed to the Maid of Bath.

*Weston.* You certainly mean to send us all with her to the devil's arse a peak indeed.

*Woodward.* You will make me squeak and squall too, in good earnest, if that is the case.

*Foots.* [*Endeavours to laugh 'em out of it.*] Oh, how I shall roast you with your black book, all the days of your life, and after your death make a playhouse saint of you, have you canonised in the legends of the theatre, and make Mr. Button there my chaplain extraordinary to your shrine, over which I shall build a new theatre, by a subscription of old batter'd rakes, at the next installation, who come to worship at the altar of Venus, for a dispensation to retire with a pension from duty.

*Woodward.* Mum.

*Weston.* Pray, what salary from a high priest of the ceremonies to his chaplain in extraordinary. Let me know

know my stipend, before I go into holy orders, under the imposition of such unhallowed hands.

*Foots.* A pension; with the old cast-off suits of the playhouse wardrobe.

*Weston.* Damn your pensions, you will make a pretty sort of a king in your Little Theatre, where you cannot give a servant you have a new suit, but a playhouse old coat with a pension.

*Foots.* Wou'd you have me give you more than I have myself—for I am but the king of pensioners, who keep all the actors and managers in Europe, Asia, and Africa, by granting a pension to the grand monarch of each for all the rest of them.

*Weston.* But that won't do for me—not a scrap of cabbage to be got, in turning and metamorphosing of old cloaths over and over ten thousand times, into ten thousand forms for one fool, after another has done with them, till they are fit for nothing but to be sold as old rags to the paper-mill at last.

*Foots.* Hush—hush, here's hush-money for you, to stop his mouth. (How he squints at it.) [*Aside.*]

*Weston.* No hush-money for me. Stop the mouths of your creditors with it: for I neither will nor can trust you; for if I shou'd, its more than nine out of ten will do to me.

*Woodward.* Hush, I say; and don't expose yourself to make bankrupts of us all.

*Weston.* Since matters are blown so far, I'll e'en close in with the Hermit and the Maid of Bath's enterprize for the new world, to make a suit for myself in another country. So fairly met, fairly parted.

*Foots.* If you are so resolved, I shall recommend you, in return for your past services as taylor to the Patriarch, and to his lady's maid for her husband, and then you may both cut out as many suits for the wardrobe of the church, as there are new modes of dress as yet undiscovered in the *terra incognita* of the courts above, for a change of the old ministry into a new one.

*Weston.* Hah, I thank you, sire; egad, that will just do—there's no want of cloth there. One may cut and cabbage, and cut again, without pinching our customers, or clipping them into short coats, as one would clip the king's coin.

I'll

### 38 THE MAID OF BATH MARRIED.

I'll cut them long enough, I warrant you, for the good of those who bear up the train.

Tho' they buy it, God knows, dear enough in a Farce, Who walk with their nose in a sh-tt-n Cub's a——.

*Foots.* Well, since all things are settled—let us see how you are qualified for your new office, by bearing my train, before I recommend you to your betters.

*[Major carries the sword of state before Mr. Foote, who makes his exit, and Weston with his nose pushing at Foote's posteriors.]*

Rank as a he-goat, with eating of garlick and onion, in his last expedition into the land of cakes.

Oh, if I cou'd but wheel about now, with the wind upon the nether bow, we shou'd soon get into port with an, O sweet Edenborough, I smell thee now.

*Woodward.* Methinks I had better be content as I am, with the court promise of a playhouse title, in the legends of theatrical saints, than buy a real title with martyrdom.

Or I like Button may but make a curse,  
With discontentment bad enough still worse.  
But happy he where such a stink is waft,  
Who in the rear walks with the wind abaft;  
For that will surely drive the foremost man,  
To run away, as fast as e'er he can;  
As far as e'er his English nose can reach,  
By sea or land, from his Scotch colleague's breech.

But where contrary gales blow't in your face,  
It's best to move the foremost in the race;  
For then, according to the Scottish plan,  
It is the devil take the hindmost man——  
If so, the Lord have mercy on the rear  
Of our great sheriff for th' ensuing year.  
Unless he acts politically snug,  
To stop three holes with one true British plug.  
For thus he'd better die for want of breath,  
Then with a Scottish stench be stunk to death.

For these two evils there is no redress,  
From Irish manœuvres or from Scots finess;  
Till he now in the rear shall wheel about,  
To lead the uppish Scots a downward rout;  
For then the lads, who caper in a farce,  
Must with their nose walk in a Wilkes's a——

Until

Until he leaves the retrogrades to brag,  
Like lusty loons, fast in an Irish quag;  
For they who will not with the British crown,  
Go to the top, must go to bottom down.

[Exit Woodward.]

S C E N E V.

*Scent upon a Bench in SIMPSON'S Grove.*

*Doctor.* I hope then you are satisfied, that a life of chastity in the body, is only the means to ripen us into the social frankness of a free, open and ingenious declaration of our minds. Which is the right way to bring us next into the conjugal enjoyments of love in both.

*Maid of Bath.* If I understand you right, we purchase our freedom in the mind, with the price of as little indulgence as possible in the body, as we buy those indulgences of the body again at the expence of true freedom in the mind.

*Doctor.* Till we mix the decent freedom of the one with the decent follies of the other, in a social and inoffensive compound of a clear head and a free heart together; or the sons and daughters of men would be starched up in all the morose and churlish austerities of monks and nuns, without any relish for the most innocent amusement in life.

*Maid of Bath.* The true taste in female life, I am apt to think, lies between the two extremes of a coquet on one hand, and of a prude on the other.

*Doctor.* The same true taste of life, in our sex, lies in the same medium, between the austere monk on one side, and the licentious debauchee on the other; but tho' there is no wisdom in always either laughing at the follies, or in always weeping at the vices of mankind, yet that is no reason, why we may not sometimes laugh as well as mourn upon a proper occasion. But to divert this philosophy with a little mixture of gaiety.

Pray, have you seen the new song in the alamode court taste of the times.

*Maid of Bath.* If you will sing your part, I shall make a shift to chant mine with all the freedom I can.

A New

40 THE MAID OF BATH MARRIED.

A NEW SONG.

I.

*Doctor.* Prithee, tell me, dear Chloe, what is it engages,  
In the dark dukes to lift up your latch,  
Or to knock at your gate with a couple of pages,  
Plenipo-like so full of dispatch?

II.

Say now, is it the diamond, that shines in each  
locket,  
Or the smile dimpling under a patch,  
Need I ask, when I view on your arms Cupid's  
locket,  
Or the heavings, where love keeps his watch.

III.

Hap the charm of this here circumambient girdle,  
Whereon the ambuscade lies on the catch,  
At his mam's masquerade in her groves full of  
myrtle,  
Till a Chloe can meet with her match.

IV.

*M. of B.* You are going (hold, Sir) where your duke has  
never been,  
Yet as if you would learn on the catch,  
What it is, that sets fire unto love's magazine,  
Like a Venus, I say, is a match.

V.

*Doctor.* But, ah! what is a match, till it dips Cupid's seal,  
In a what's better felt than exprest?  
*M. of B.* Know, Sir, then if your flint is as good as my steel,  
I am ready to tell you the rest.

VI.

*Doctor.* But, my fair, tell me where? *M. of B.* at the  
church, when the bell,  
On a sunday calls people to prayers;  
Or do penance in sheets, unless—(*Doctor.* That's  
put in well.)  
The physician is splitting of hairs.

*Doctor.*

## VII.

*Doctor.* Like a lawyer then first let us settle the deeds,  
 E'er we with our instruments rush on  
 The squat office of priesthood, to count o'er your  
 beads,

In the pulpit, where you find the cushion.

*Doctor.* I can go no farther.

*Maid of Bath.* Methinks you have gone too far in indecency. Any thing more would have been too much in point of delicacy.

*Doctor.* And any thing less would have been too little in point of wit and good humour, especially since we shall enjoy no more in practice, than we now open out in speculation.

(*Snt certi denique fines quos ultra citraque, nequit consistere rectum.*) [Aside.

*Maid of Bath.* And I fancy, a wife is as loth to give up the one, after she is married, as a maid is to give up the other before.

*Doctor.* It must be owned, that matrimony is apt to make a very great change in both sexes, either for the better or the worse.

*Maid of Bath.* And so you, gentlemen, strait lace us maids up in all the restraints of delicacy in our maidenhoods, in order to give a greater loose to our tongues, when we become wives, and tied fast in the marriage noose.

*Doctor.* No, we had rather a maid would be free, that the wife may be as tongue-tied as you please.

*Maid of Bath.* I differ with you, there; for the delicacy of the maid is the right way to bring her into the decent freedoms of the wife.

*Doctor.* The more the maid minces, the more the wife is too apt to gallop, sometimes faster than we can follow her.

*Maid of Bath.* With two such contrast opinions, we shall be apt to strike fire with a collision between us.

But if what you say be true, that matrimony alters the men as much as the maids, your opinion will perhaps be mine, and mine be yours, after we are married; and therefore as I marry for the better, I shall now the more readily give up the worse—Pray, is that the freedom of true delicacy?

F

*Doctor.*

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*Doctor.* As free as it is delicate, and as delicate as it is free. Such a sentiment has the compound fragrantcy of conjugal love in it. *[The bell rings.]*

*Maid of Bath.* Be that as it may, the bell rings, and calls us on the stage of action to settle these points of speculation in practise, with the assistance of a wise and virtuous ministry, in the privy council of the gods and goddesses in Drury Lane.

*Doctor.* Allon, allon.——

*Maid of Bath.* Pray go before, it will be my duty soon to follow.

*[The Doctor sets forward, seems staggered about something, and trifles in a sauntering wheeling pace.]*

*Maid of Bath, to the Audience.*

Why, sure the Doctor ne'er will breed a fraction,  
Now with the maid, just at the point of action.

But if he does—the Lord have mercy on him,  
For we shall turn the tables plump upon him.

And if—he goes—I'll keep close at his heels,  
To goad and gall him, even till he reels;  
To take his corn, and then, like any hack,  
I'll ride him, till he throws me on my back.

*[Exit sequens Doctorem.]*

S C E N E VI.

The PARADE.

*Enter Doctor and the Maid of Bath.*

*Maid of Bath.* Thus had I been jilted and juggled by these heroes, first in sound minds with their diseased bodies, and next in sound bodies full of distempered minds, unless you, like a true physician of both soul and body, had stood your ground (with a little shifting) to fix me at last in both for my deliverance, with a sound mind in a sound body, out of the hands of these my mock-love tormentors.

*Doctor.* Your happiness, mam, is mine, as I hope by this time mine is in a fair way of being yours.

But neither could your sex be happy under the predominancy of evil over, good, nor our sex content in  
seeing

feeling the discontent of yours, till like men and Britons, in the front of nature and nations, we advanced to bring both out of unclean into a clean and more courtly mode of existence.

*M. of B.* Or something wou'd be wanting still,  
To ease our hearts and please our will,  
The will not pleas'd, our spirits fail,  
One want's enough to turn the scale.

*Doctor.* That cruel something unpossess,  
Corrodes and heavens all the rest.

*M. of B.* That something should we yet obtain,  
Wou'd soon create a greater pain.

*Doctor.* Till with the Maid of Bath, God save us,  
We shall have all the world first gave us.

A Choir Chant.

*M. of B.* Theearth is then full of thy goodness, O Lord,

*Doctor.* When a priest is so purged from sin,

*En. Parson.* As to fill his wife's head and her heart with  
the word,

*En. Squire.* And her belly next up to her chin.

*En. Lawyer.* For until she cries out in her fulness, *so, so.*

*En. Major.* There is something, believe me, *in vacuo*\*  
which none but a soldier, or a Parson in a red ccat, or in a  
black one, can ever dislodge, and make up the breach.

But who now has the best news for the new couple.

*Lawyer.* I give you both joy of each other, and next of  
an estate, which your brother, madam, has left you in  
the medius nexus, or common place between south and  
north latitude in America.

*Maid of Bath.* Pray, whom had you this news from?

*Lawyer.* This letter came post from Mr. Button-hole,  
taylor, at Bristow; who says, the news comes by the  
Victory, captain Patience, in the slave trade, from the  
Cape of Good Hope to Carthage; and he requests me  
to be the messenger of this event to the Maid of Bath.

*Maid of Bath.* Now when I take a near look of you,  
if I recollect right, I have seen you upon Mr. Button-  
hole's business at our house; pray, is not your name Mr.  
Button.

\* See note to the Jubilee Ode, page stanz. which shows  
what this Vacuum is in to the church and state.



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*Lawyer.* (I'll e'en put a good face on't, and make the best I can of the worst, since it so happens.) [*Aside.*

Yes, madam, my name is Button, and should be proud of your favours in making your wedding-suit; for Mr. Button-hole has declined business.

*Maid of Bath.* You do not mean to carry on business in that dress, I hope, Sir?

*Lawyer.* No, Madam, but in this, he unhulls himself into Mr. Button. [*All laugh aloud.*] Button!—is this Mr. Button? *Parturient montes.*

*Parson.* An abortive discovery—You have been too hasty in your delivery, before you knew the issue of the plot, Mr. Button. This is like flooding before the birth, Mr. Button. I wish you may not fail in your issue, Mr. Button.

*Major.* Who the devil made you a lawyer, Mr. Button?

*Mr. Button.* The Knight of Bath, who employed me in drawing up the marriage settlement with this young Lady; but I took care in such a manner, as a lawyer, as gives me some hopes of the Lady's favours, as a taylor to the family.

*Major.* Yes, yes, you shall make the marriage-suit too, in Hermit fashion, much after the same manner, or I am mistaken.

*Parson.* O you impostor, I'll have you stript according to law before a Justice of the Peace.

*Button.* Thank my stars—I know how to make myself another suit, if you do; and that is more than the Knight and Rector of Bath; put them both together in one black gown, can do for themselves, without the help of me or my art.

*Parson.* You are a fox, who wants to cut off our tails, because you have lost your own.

*Button.* Mr. Button has the spirit of a taylor, I can tell you, Sir; and you know, nine of them make a man; but I have nineteen upon my board, which make two men, and one over.

*Parson.* Don't be impertinent—[*turns with a hum from Mr. Button to the couple*]—I bring great good news from the Court to your master the Hermit-Doctor, in no less than a letter from the Premier. There it is.

*Doctor.*

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Doctor. [*Opens and reads*]

HOLY SIRE,

The King had nominated T. Woodward, Esq; to be his Governor-general of East and West Florida; but whereas the said Woodward has failed in his disguised essay upon the Maid of Bath, it is his Majesty's pleasure to transfer the commission upon you, with the leave of the crown, for the church to begin its new mode of conquest upon the minds of our enemies, where the state, at its *ne plus ultra*, could carry its conquests, for want of more breath, no further in the body; that you may be the happy agent of leading the British system, which has been struggling for these ten years last past under an asthma, into the benefit of fresh air, for the recovery of its lungs. God speed—— (*Sign'd*)

NORTH-BRITON.

Parson. How do you like it, Doctor?

Doctor. Very well, but it will please the Hermit better. It is enough to make us all strip and turn Hermits.

I think, I may venture to ask the favour of your company to a share of the wedding gala, so far as may be consistent with the gravity of your profession.

Parson. Gravity!—I never had any in my life. You have invited the Rector to dinner, but you will find the Knight of Bath at the bottle. [*Slips off his gown.*] For behold! the Knight of Bath—This is like throwing off our surtouts in warm weather, to keep us the better in our strait coats. [*Aside.—A loud laugh.*]

Major. The Knight of Bath metamorphis'd into the Rector of Bath, to get a night's lodging with the Maid of Bath—A luscious Priest, upon my soul.

Doctor. You have borne the mortification in the loss of your mistress with the resignation of a divine, and with the gallantry of a courtier indeed.

Knight of Bath. As you must do presently in the disappointment of a wife, or I am damnably mistaken.—What says the Squire? They sha'n't make me the butt of their giggle.—The more in the plot, the merrier the game, Gentlemen—to keep you and me in countenance; Mr. Button.

Mr.

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*Mr. Button.* You sha'nt think to hum me so—The Knight has only pulled off one disguise, to conceal himself the better in another—Strip him from head to foot, and you will find *one Foote* in him.

*Knight of Bath.* *Ex quo vis ligno non fit Mercurius*—My name is Foote, the Comedian, and King of the Little Theatre, and Father of the Maid of Bath: so that it is my duty now to take care of my daughter *in propria persona*.

[*All burst into a peal.—Nascetur ridiculus mus.*]

*Squire.* You have all brought good news to the betrothed pair, which I take as so much good news to myself.

*All.* Hear him, hear him—

*Squire.* For whereas I could not make a place good in Ireland, till I had first play'd this couple out of north into south latitude, the Court has given me a post (and a very good post it is as the times go) in the Postmaster-general's place of Ireland, where I must now go, Doctor, in your stead.

*Doctor.* That is very generous of you, I must acknowledge, Squire.

*Squire.* Not at all. For you have got what was intended for me, if I cou'd have jockey'd you out of the Maid of Bath—but I have got what was intended for you, if you had not kept too sharp a look out against your enemy, and played your game with exquisite skill, good-will, and resolution. For I am Irish—

*Doctor.* What a world we live in. The wits of a whole playhouse at work to juggle one single individual out of his right to his proper portion.

*Squire.* So the world goes, and let him mend it, who would make it better for me. As fast as you mend this little machine, Doctor, so fast shall I marr it, as long as my name is T. Woodward—with my drollery—

[*Another loud laugh.*]

*Doctor.* You have marred the Squire indeed, Mr. Woodward. Thus the Gods made a world, with all things right in it for men to marr with mending. The state mends all in the right into all in the wrong, for the church to turn all in the wrong into all in the right again, which puts an end to the old mode with a new one.

*Maid*

*Maid of Bath.* I wish, Gentlemen, ye would set me to rights; that ye, who turn'd the Hermit into a Doctor, may turn the Doctor into a Hermit again; for I am so surfeit-sick of so much hypocrisy in both church and state, that I heartily wish to keep my first promise to you, and continue the Maid of Bath still.

*Doctor.* Nay then, it's time for me to appear in my true character.

And here I am, a Hermit, who has fairly carried off the Maid of Bath from so many heroes of dramatic gallantry, without playing a false card in the whole game.

*Woodward.* Hold, father—*diruēt edifi:at* is the motto of the world below.

I.

We grant it—Eve was taken out of Adam;  
In church or state yet on the woman's plan,  
She makes to marr, he marris to make the madam,  
Yet woman still both makes and marris the man.  
She builds but to pull down, he on her ground  
Rebuilds anew, and so the world goes round.

II.

*Foot.* When she, who made, has marr'd—it is man's part,  
To make himself, and with himself his wife,  
Who supersedes her worse with better art,  
Or both fall into chaos full of strife.  
Thus man begun, what woman ends, it's true,  
Till man repairs her old world with a new.

III.

*Major.* Yet if a layman builds in love or strife  
A world for woman only to pull down,  
It is the churchman's part to make a wife  
For statesmen, who are servants of the crown.  
Your bible binds you to give up your wife  
Unto the crown a ransom for your life.

So consult your oracle, Doctor Hermit, for a categorical answer upon demand; for I have news, great and wondrous news too, for both you and this young Lady, which concerns and will affect every one among you. But it is at present too big for utterance; and yet it is  
not

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not big enough for a delivery. You must tune, e'er I can play.

*Hermit.* [*Stare one at another.*] I put on the grave Hermit for the cure of myself; I put on the Doctor for the cure of another; I have put off the Doctor, and re-assumed the Hermit, for the gratification of you and the Maid of Bath.—What wou'd you have me to do still?

*Woodward.* Do you stick in your shirt to save your skin. [*Seizes the Maid of Bath.*]

*Major.* Wou'd you save a penny to lose a pound? Penny wise and pound foolish. You are my prisoner.

[*Seizes the Hermit.*]

*Woodward.* You have been the cause of stripping the Rector in the Knight of Bath, into the Knight in his cap and feather, and the Knight in the Player, into plain Mr. Foote in the man.

*Major.* Tho' you may have acted the moral man, like a Proteus, in every shape, yet if you smuggle a character still, the old serpent must cast off another skin, and slip out of the old into a new one, before he can escape out of our hands.

*Hermit.* But if ye do make me strip into *propria persona*, gentlemen.

I shall claim and gain the Maid of Bath in *propria persona* from you gentlemen; so off, stand and behold the Hermit in *propria persona*, gentlemen.

[*A laugh at his long beard.*]

*Ecce homo: quam pulchrum est digito monstrari et dicier hic est*, gentlemen.

*Foote.* Strip him again, he has more new modes wrapt up in his old one still.

*Major.* You are fallen into merciless hands, father; like the man who fell among thieves.

*Hermit.* If I must, I must and will too—*Baptistam sequitur rex.* [*Foote faints away.*]

*Foote.* [*Recovers.*] Crucify him, crucify him in a crown of thistles, crucify him.

*Hermit.* Then I shall leave it to you as my successor—Fools make rods thus for their own backs.

*All.* Where shall we run, its all over—

[*Foote slips out.*]

*Squire.* No, no, lets stay to see the Maid of Bath strip—  
*Major.*

*Major.* No, no, lets leave her to her husband to strip her in sheets.

*Enter Foote.*

Well, Mr. Hermit, if you will have the Maid of Bath for your wife, I have got a present for you out of the print-shop.

[*All flock about it.*

The title is, a Newmarket race, between a British bull and a Spanish cow, 'upon a new race ground, called Falkland, near Shatover-bill in Oxfordshire.

There is, see! a Spanish cow (supposed to be just come a bulling from off the continent of South America) riding with her two fore feet upon the British bull's hips, and bellowing this label,

If you won't ride me, I'll ride you.

The bull's label is, I cannot get on, till you get off, unless I should run away from under you, which would let you fall into my ground, but it is mine to stand.

On the right hand side of this print is a side view of the three bires, with the heads of the horned cattle a rowting and bellowing out of the three doors of the high, low and middle bire.

On the left hand side view of the print stands the mother on the right hand of her son, with her left hand upon his head, and with her right pointing to shew him the Spanish cow upon the British bull's back.

Behind them stands a baboon in a bonnet, playing his monkey tricks, and sneering out this label.

If he cannot see his face in so many true looking-glasses at home, he cannot fail to read it from this picture abroad, unless his jugglers should bribe the review to damn the picture for being a true likeness of the original which it represents.

The verses under this print are, with a motto.

*Ex stimulus ex fine fluens mel mollit acerbum.*

But e'er he comes, what bellowing of ire  
Among the horned cattle in the bire!  
Left Johnny Bull should bring, who takes the lead,  
The Spanish kine into the British breed.

Scarce had he started with his fav'rite smack,  
Till Philip's milch cow leaps upon his back,  
Which rous'd his courage to shake off the pout,  
And roar, that he would ride his turn about,

G

When

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When she had drawn her bone out of his bone,  
Away they run both to convention lone,  
Where both are to go half and half quite through,  
The bull calf in her name, in his the cow.

How do you like the forms of your conjugal convention, Mr Hermit.

*Hermit.* I shan't give up a wife in the substance, for any shadow you can bring out of the print shop.

*Poote.* If you don't like the shadow, I shall bring you the substance presently, which you may hap like a great deal worse. (Sweat him, till I return.) [*Aside.*]

*Woodward.* The jockey would have play'd Newmarket with you, indeed, Mr. Hermit—but pray do you mean to set up house-keeping at the court or city end of the town, Sir.

*Hermit.* At the court end, in a new house a building for us near Hyde Park-gate.

*Woodward.* O'ons, what wou'd you, a Hermit, do in town,

With all your virtues in a tatter'd gown?

You neither B—e's can act, nor C——m's part,  
Nor damn a W—s with M——d's keenest art.

You dare not C——d your G——r's wife.  
Nor romp with R—y's dutchess for your life.

Nor wou'd you G——n wives, and then divorce  
Best, betters, good and bad for what's still worse.

No, let a H——d rob Pandora's box,  
And with his leprosy redress her pox.

It's Twitcher's part to S——h all the sex,  
With fiddle-faddle out of——*vivat rex*——

Or yet to R——h the S——s breed.  
Or sow plough'd land with chaff instead of seed.

Vir bonus et pauper, linguâ quæ et pectore verus,

Quid tibi vis, urbem qui, sobiane, petis?

Qui nec leno potes, nec comestator haberi,

Nec pavidos tristi voce citare reos.

Non potes uxorem cari corrumpere amici,

Nec potes algentes arrigere ad vetulas.

Vendere nos varos circum palatia fumos,

Plaudere te cano, plaudere nec glaphyro.

Unde miser vives? homo fidus, certus amicus,

Hoc nihil est, nunquam philomelos eris.

Or

Or yet to hand a W———e from her church,  
And then to leave a countess in the lurch.  
You like a man of God, I know, would scorn,  
For in Great Britain's center you was born,  
Who will not smother, what you shou'd reveal,  
To keep a mistress with the privy seal.

Nor wou'd you turn the H—e of L—s, that nods,  
Into a pack of Epicurus's gods. [See note at the end.

Nor, while the C——ns pope-eye legs of muttuns,  
Wou'd you amuse yourself in making buttuns.

For puffs and court perfumes you have no forge,  
Nor can you clap the D——r nor G——e?  
Who, with their N——h upon his latter legs,  
Are drawing off the Constitution's dregs.

How will you shift, my cock, without a lob?  
Grace goes for nought, where C—— bears all the bob.

Answer.

*Hermit. Corruptio unius fit generatio alterius.*

A word, hark, in your ear—corn; wine and oil,  
Luxuriant grow best in the dirtiest soil.

Or church and state had never come refin'd,  
Out of the worst of man and woman-kind;  
To end, with all deliverances past,

King Harry into a Dowager at last.

Unless a Woolsey now joins hand in hand,

To pass this wild into the holy land.

Where they may drink the wine and eat the bread,  
Which grew so rich out of Mydden-stead.

*Major.* But if you run away with the new world, you  
mean surely to give us only a better right to the old by so  
doing.

*Hermit.* Surely—for by such a conquest of the new  
with the Minus, we shall and nothing else can unite the  
christian powers of Europe, into one system for a christian  
conquest, and triunity of Europe, Asia and Africa,  
with the major powers restored under the auspicas of the  
British crown—or it's all over, indeed—but I'm ashamed  
of so much ado about nothing. For

The Hermit, stript into a play-house king,  
Is like a king, bound now to give the maid,  
With royal grace, and this new wedding ring  
Unto the Major, with a church'd cockade.



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For he alone shall rise and never fall,  
Who stands his dress and never strips at all.

*Enter Foote introducing the Queen of Chastity, in her  
Bride's dress, and presents the Monkeys to the Monk.*

Sire, this lady was made by heaven for you, as you were for her, that two negatives to matrimony, in the letter may (as you know) make one affirmative in the spirit, as a cause for an effect in the consequence.

The noble generosity of soul in winning for us, and in next resigning to us the Maid of Bath, by an act of your own free grace, to the principal proprietor of the Little Theatre, binds me, as petite monarche thereof, with gratitude to restore you this lady, whom I know your soul loveth, in all her immaculate charms.

She fell into our hands, a captive by the laws of war, in the prosecution of our intrigue with the Maid of Bath; and what would have been more fatal both to her and you, she must have fallen a sacrifice to our resentment of your inconstancy to her, thro' a false attachment to the Maid of Bath—unless you had acted that part of a king for us, in the sanctuary of the church, which we could not act for ourselves in the drama of either church or state, till you first did it or fus.

But where priests thus correct what is amiss,  
They with their own promote the common bliss.

*Ege et Rex.*

When thus an actor dare put off the elf,  
It's time for me then to put on myself,  
And give a crown of honour for his life,  
To him, who with the church restores my wife.  
For which I set the two crowns, I had won,  
Upon the heads of Major and the Nun,  
With heaven's blessings on our pious pray'rs,  
That they may bless the land with hopeful heirs.

This done, we slip out of the regal chair,  
(On which the heads of kings repose their care)  
Both into, each, our patriarchal gown,  
To usher in by turns the sun and moon.

And when to-night the Major has carest her,  
A Foote may act to-morrow George's jester.

To

To him, who turns the king into the spark,  
To set in sheets his country's patriarch.  
Till monster killing, as in ages past,  
Ends but to make each Maid a wife at last.

MORAL. *By the Patriarchs.*

To-night the moral without any jokes,  
(Which out of maids makes wives for other folks)  
Instructs us all with love to one another,  
To win a wife and give her to your brother.  
For that's the way in fashion by good hap,  
To catch your own wife in another's trap,  
And since you have done this for me, it's true,  
Another night I'll do as much for you.  
[*Exeunt all, save the Maid of Bath, who advances to speak.*]

*Note to Epicurus's Gods.*

It is the duty of the H—e of L—s to find a cure for such disorders as the H—e of C—s could not prevent, but to prevent such disorders in the body politic as will admit of no cure, unless they are prevented by the L—s with a process *à priori seorsum*.

But whereas to prevent the necessary disorders of a process *à posteriori seorsum* with a process *à priori seorsum* is the only effectual method of qualifying the H—e of L—s to find a cure for such disorders in the process *à posteriori*, as could not be prevented.—But forasmuch as the H—e of L—s under the ties of nature, cannot investigate the process of rectified reason *à priori seorsum*, with the animal mind of first causes, nor the H—e of C—s trace it with the animal mind of second causes, nor yet the K—g and all his P—y C—l, with his animal mind of first and second causes in conjunction; it follows, that neither the K—g, L—ds or C—ns singly or conjunctly can either qualify to prevent or cure the disorders of either the body natural, ecclesiastic or politic, which are overrun all alike with evil.

Because forasmuch as the disorders rise from, and lie in the animal mind and body of human nature, nothing less than an explicit communion of the soul and spirit, with the mind and body of human nature, can prevent or cure the evils of the latter with the healing balm of the

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the former, which obliges K—g, L—s and C—s, under the letter of nature, law and gospel, to introduce the spirit of a justifying law and of a sanctifying gospel, *extra ordinem*, for the redress of national evils under the letter of nature, law and gospel.

But all that K—g, L—s and C—s under the letter (which exhibits the cause in and by the effect) can do, is to digest, unite and incorporate the animal mind and body, *a posteriori*, which obliges the church to digest, unite and incorporate the soul and spirit of first and second causes *a priori*, for a coalition and coincidence with the animal mind and body of second and first causes, *a posteriori*, as the medium to an explicit communion of the divine and human nature, at top and bottom in the body natural, ecclesiastic and politic, for the restoration of the major powers upon christian principles of administration and government, to the British state of South, Welsh and North Britons, in one indivisible system, yet consisting of three distinct parts, thro' the *medius nexus* of an explicit trinitarian, *extra ordinem*, for peace and prosperity at home, and for glory abroad; or Great Britain must end with a revulsion and an explosion into a bubble in the shades of distraction, *quod ut ne fiat, deprecor proviribus*.

T H E

## THE EPILOGUE.

Spoken by the MAID of BATH.

To night we have with tugging at the string,  
Play'd up the kite to bring us down a king,  
With all the gods and goddesses above,  
To strip us for a paradise of love ;  
Till men and maids are by each other broke,  
To drive two pair of doves in Cupid's yoke.

For at the pump-room who would be the maid,  
To live and die a virgin by her trade,  
Unless she had a chance to gain her cull,  
With filling glasses overflowing full.

Thus quit of one, we shall and must provide  
Another maid still for another bride,  
To-morrow night, for each night of our lives,  
And who can e'er go sick of new Bath Maids for wives.

A. M. E. COOKE.

*Lasciva pagina, casta vita.*

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POST

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## POSTSCRIPT.

**O**N the following principles let the P. S. critics raise a storm to blow away the chaff as far as they please, so be they do but leave the solid parts of it to the Author, who will laugh in his sleeve for the service they do him.

For the political fun of this Comedy lies in mining a valuable quantity of solid grains of gold-dust among a heap of saw-dust, and then raising a fresh brisk gale to darken the air with a dispersion of the latter for the amusement of the shallow ones, who frequent the Theatre, not for the solid sterling brilliancy of good sense, which settle softly to the ground, with their own gravity, but for the sake of seeing the arch drolleries of theatrical expression in the outward action of the performers, that the more solid and profound part of the audience (who think deep and lie close) may be the better able under the colour of theatrical fun (in suborning a couple of their own informers, to hum and bankrupt the judgment and popular credit of their city opponent) to retain the inquisitors of the nation in their net of chicanery, while they pocket up the gold-dust for their own use, and leave a few gleanings of the political harvest for their dupes and underlings.

But that the one may not laugh at the other, we have in this Play thrown some of such weight into the heap, as will burst or burn out their pocket bottoms for a scramble to the people, unless they restore them to the right owner.

*Spectatum admissi risum teneatis amici.*

~~John Wesley~~ *Carle*  
N. B. Lord Mayor and Sheriffs united in one individual, is the *conditio sine qua non* (at this period and crisis of time) of saving the city from the danger of losing both, *aude sapere.*

## FINIS.









